



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

AMERICAN WOODS FOR FURNITURE.

THE growing scarcity of black-walnut, which ranks next to mahogany in price, is not wholly a thing to lament, since it has brought the strong-grained light woods again into use. Carved oak in Jacobean chairs and cabinets may begin once more to gather color, slowly and richly as a meerschau clouds. Oak will stain like ebony; but let no art-lover of true taste countenance the practice of staining woods which are beautiful in their clear veining, alive from the axe. Oak aside, all knowledge of forest craft and joinery leagues to search out new woods for cabinet-work. The curied maple, valued in England, is next to the satinwood of the tropics in color and lustre; and the clear maple, boldly carved, may rank next to white holly, of which costly drawing-room suites are chiselled in Louis XVI. style, and these lead the fashion with Empire mahogany and ebonized furniture. The latter is past its first favor, and those dreadful visions with which expensive furnishers have saddened our eyes shall vex us no more: visions of black and gold tapestry carpets, and zebra-hued hangings of black and yellow damasked satin, or, as one leading upholsterer actually showed me last season, black and gold guipure lace for drawing-room curtains to match the ebony and gilt furniture, cushioned in black and gold brocade. It was a kind of imperial mourning, which suggested yellow fever and black death. Not to condemn ebonized furniture altogether—for nothing betrays limited judgment like sweeping prejudices against a thing excellent in its own rank, though not universally admirable—fashionable houses have had enough of it for a while, and a cabinet or pedestal will answer as reminder of the style. It may linger, too, in country houses of good keeping, where a bygone style sometimes pleasantly holds its graces till the fashion comes round again, and where slender ebony and gilt well relieves pale creamy French cretonnes and light Aubusson. Ebony always calls for light surroundings.

In place of the choice which has existed so long between walnut, ebony, and expensive rosewood, a wealth of woods is now offered—not only curled maple and ash, but curled elm, with figures and flakings like rose-engine or Persian patterns; hickory, which with its fine tough grain will carve and polish like ivory, and may justly class as a precious wood, lasting for generations; and cherry, that aromatic domestic mahogany which is worth much better attention than it receives, both in shaping and polish. And not only cherry comes in use, but its kin of fruit-trees, tough and close of fibre and rich in polish, though few imagine an old fruit-tree fit for anything but indifferent firewood. Let such learn thrift before they burn value. An English carver thinks himself in luck if he can get the stump of an old apple-tree to season for brackets and high carving, for it works well and is charming in tone. For table-tops, and odd chairs, and choice pieces, let the amateur joiner and carver go no farther afield than till he finds an old pippin or plum-tree ready for the axe. As for pear-wood, have we not been buying it stained long enough, and paying three prices for it as black-walnut? That is a stale trick of joinery. There, too, is beech from the Indiana levels which have been stripped of their walnut. Redwood, truest to the grain of any known wood, and California laurel, with a score of rich inlays from Pacific forests, are in millionaires' houses. While for paupers—of taste—what so cheering in its poverty as cottage wainscoting of red Canadian and yellow pine, with doors in clear wide panels of white Northern pine, its satiny surface tenderly lustrous, like a woman's flesh or a salmon's breathing sheen? Suites of cottage furniture, after English design, of pine finished in shellac meet the difficult requirement of something inexpensive but in complete good taste. Pine is not precisely cheap in an artistic view; for is it not in the house of Mr. Frederick Leighton, the English artist, that the inlaying of yellow Southern pine is so much admired for its effect like dead gold? How many visitors to the picturesque hotel at Long Beach last summer had eyes for the rich-

ness of the natural coloring of the pine wood in the great veranda, which, as seen just before completion, between the dead white sands of the shore and the intense blue overhead, seemed to glow and flush with ruddy, mellow color? Artistic teaching rapidly shows us how to value common materials which lie in abundance to our hands.

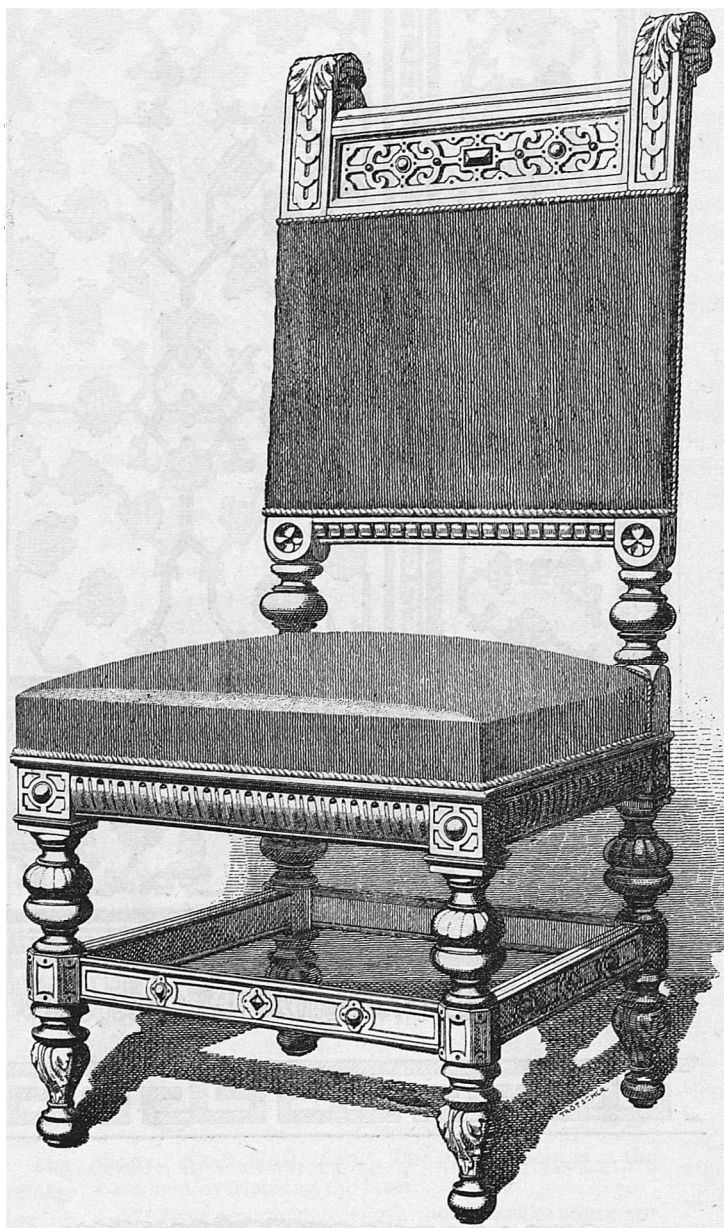
SHIRLEY DARE.

PRACTICAL ROOM DECORATION.

I.

A MODEL BACK PARLOR.

ONE finds in the books of the day devoted to "art" decoration and furniture wondrous descriptions, almost without end, of wondrous "mansions" which too often are useful only as frightful examples of what can be done by the combination of ostentatious magnificence and pretentious ignorance. To seek at such sources



LIBRARY CHAIR, MADE BY IRMLER, OF VIENNA.

for any real practical suggestions that might be applied with success to the fitting up of the home of Brown, Smith, or Robinson, would be vain. It is therefore with a feeling of peculiar satisfaction that we turn again to the excellent "Outline Sketches for Furnishing" by H. J. Cooper, already noticed in our columns as appearing in our English contemporary, *The Artist*. These are at once sensible and practical, and will be found, with very slight modification, as valuable for American homes as for those of England.

Mr. Cooper begins his series with a fairylike transformation of that small dull back room, well known in London houses as the library, study, or morning-room; that looks across a back yard or vacant space on to a blank wall, or perhaps some outbuilding, which, together with neighboring houses, seriously diminishes the supply of light, probably at no time too plentiful. In our American cities, with our usual abundance of light, the back room, known as sitting-room or back parlor, which answers to this London apartment, is, as a rule, by no

means so cheerless. But there is doubtless familiar to our readers many a room looking northward which is as dreary and as much in need of enlivenment as Mr. Cooper's "study," and as he converts that dismal apartment into a pleasant place, and neutralizes the effect of the ugly surroundings, so may they do likewise.

The elements for an artistic treatment are: Four square walls, each measuring on plan twelve or fourteen feet at most, by some eleven feet six inches in height; a large flat window, on the top-and-bottom-sash principle; a four-panelled door; and a gray or black marble mantelpiece, with a cast-iron stove. The floor is of the usual common pine boards, and the ceiling has a cornice of insignificant plaster ornament, with a "ceiling-flower" three feet in diameter in the middle. The woodwork is probably grained to imitate oak, and the walls are covered with a light brown paper, of red diamond pattern, this being accepted as the correct pattern for a library; the ceiling is whitewashed.

Now, if the reader has grasped the situation, it will be obvious that for a room already but imperfectly lighted and shut out from all natural beauty, the lower tones and subdued combinations of color will not only be thrown away, but will positively increase the gloom and depression belonging to the room already by reason of its position. And yet a subdued background is required for the pictures; for it is presumed there are some to be hung.

The room, for its length and width, is already too high, and will easily bear some horizontal lines, which will have the effect of reducing it in height, also for a threefold division of wall-space, thus at once bringing in the element of variety without sacrificing the length and breadth of the room, which will, in fact, appear to be longer and broader than it really is. It would be easy to magnify the actual dimensions of this or of any room by the use of silvered glass; and in some cases it might not be objectionable to have recourse to it; but the expedient, at best flimsy and calling out no special powers of invention and application, has undoubted drawbacks, not only on account of its unreality and falsity, and the extent to which it is associated with large retail shops and restaurants, but from the necessity of giving up much wall-space, out of a limited area, that might be put to far better service. It is often humiliating to see well-bound volumes crowded together near the floor on a few mean shelves, while above, and perhaps in piers and adjacent recesses also, the wall is occupied by vacant, do-nothing mirrors in their uninteresting frames of gilt composition.

In a bachelor's room, however, plate glass is certainly less called for than in my lady's boudoir; and in the present instance it would seriously interfere with the projected scheme if introduced in too conspicuous a manner. Returning then to our starting-point, let us strike out first the broad band of wall whereon to hang small-sized pictures. There remain then the upper and lower spaces of wall; the lower measuring about 4 feet and the upper portion 5 feet.

A primary necessity of this apartment is light; and yet the walls, as far as the eye can easily rest upon them, are required of a sufficient depth of tone not to come into harsh contrast with dark oak, and accessories rather rich and sombre than light-colored. Above the picture-line, however, no such restrictions are binding upon us—beyond the admitted axiom in all decoration, that a definite relation of tone must be preserved throughout. The 5-feet space (or perhaps 4 feet 6 inches, for we must not divide our 11-feet room equally) shall therefore be covered with a paper of what may be technically termed a damask pattern. The pattern which Mr. Cooper has chosen is a conventionalized rose, closely interwoven, upon a finely powdered ground; and the coloring is a delicious green-gold, the result being achieved by the carefully calculated quantities of pale golden emerald green dotted work upon a ground of varied creamy tints with warmer touches of ochre. It is neither yellow nor green; but as a well-covered paper and one that will reflect light, nothing could answer our purpose better. So much for the upper wall, to which we can always turn with a sense of

relief. It forms at once our sky and atmosphere, and with the ceiling tinted in a single wash of creamy yellow, with a few lines of deeper color in the cornice (so as to blend it with the paper without emphasizing its deformities), we have some sort of approach to the soft and mellow golden glow of the sky above the horizon as the sun goes down.

The ceiling of this room might have been papered with a diaper pattern in yellow and white, but the employment of a pattern here was found to destroy the sense of airiness and lightness; and so it was simply tinted in distemper color a creamy yellow.

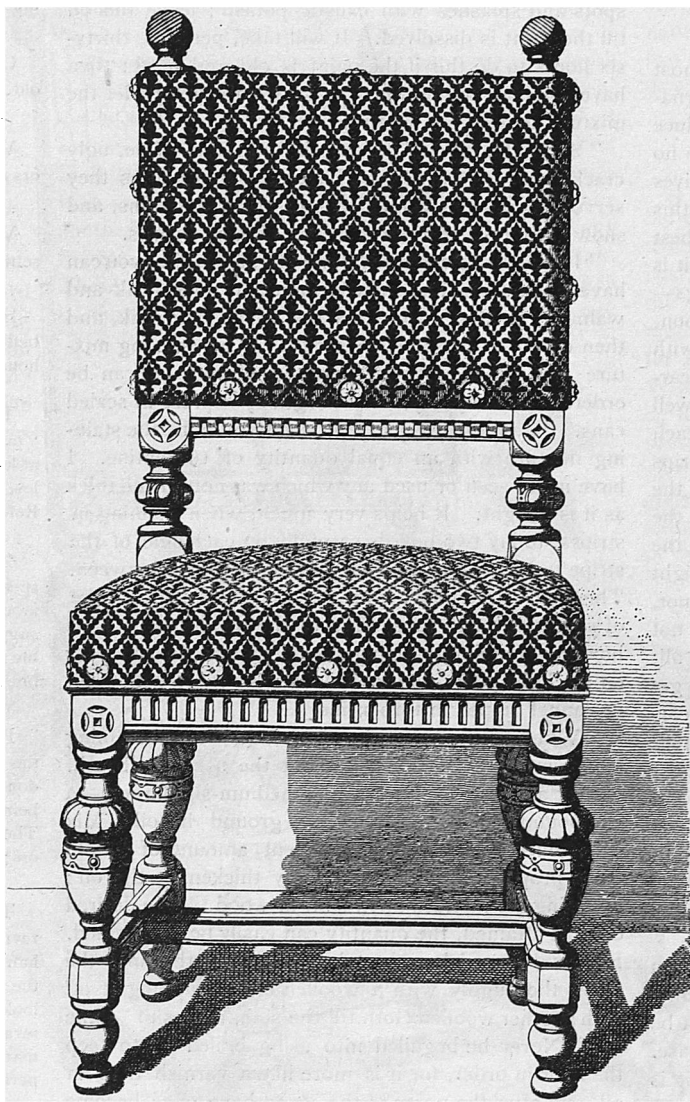
Having now got the ceiling and upper wall of a yellowish tone with a cast of golden green, it is in order to consider the best colors to use for the rest of the work. Below the upper wall-space, or frieze, a pine moulding is affixed, broad enough to act as a small shelf. This runs round the room on a level with the top of the door, or about 7 feet from the ground, an arrangement which will slightly reduce the depth of the frieze. Underneath this shelf comes the picture space, which will be margined off at its lower line, but by a smaller moulding, of about two inches, and standing forward very little, say 1½ inch. Below this narrow moulding is the dado proper. This is papered or painted; or hangings are used, or Japanese leather paper, or light framing of wood, India matting, etc., etc. In the case Mr. Cooper has in mind, the owner of the room preferred hangings. This settles the question, except so far as choice of material remains, because where there is no reasonable objection it is manifestly unnecessary to reject a suggestion and a preference. It is often as easy to harmonize one material as another, and frequently out of apparently insurmountable difficulties the most original successes are achieved. When once a possible path has been struck, it is better to adhere to your scheme and endeavor to harmonize it and to reconcile discordant elements even, than to surrender it for a totally different arrangement. This assumes that you are on the right track; if not, give it up and begin afresh.

The genial art adviser continues as follows:

Gradations of tone in a wall are always pleasant, where the wall is divided laterally as in this case; and it happens that among the various stuffs we are trying up experimentally there is one of a deep golden russet-green, a beautiful shade of pale olive and brown worsted with a large square diaper pattern of gold silk radiated from a centre. This seems most happily to accord with our greenish gold frieze, though it is a great deal heavier and will "bear out" the rest of the work. We will now color the intermediate or picture space a warm tone of russet-olive, lighter in shade than the dado-hanging, so as to connect the upper and lower portions of the wall and form a gentle gradation upward from dark to light. The wood-work must not be forgotten; indeed it comes almost first in actual execution, and the previous steps refer to tests and trials of paper and stuffs rather than to their then application. In reality everything in a scheme of decoration should be seen as nearly in its place as possible, before a stroke of work is commenced. Even after such precautions, many things may have to be modified or altered in actual working, as it requires long experience to judge from small samples what the effect will be of broader masses of color, although a practised eye will be able to gauge the result within a little. The portions to be painted are the door and shutters, the skirting, and the two dividing mouldings round the room, which separate the three courses of wall-color one from the other. For a room so dimly lighted the paint must not be too dark, nor is it required above a medium tone: this would not only be out of character with the scheme, but it is also an undoubted fact that in a small room the projecting wood-work of doors, shutters, and mouldings is sure to get rubbed and damaged, particularly in a man's room. Chocolate is too dark, though it would harmonize, especially if mixed with a little green to give it an olive complexion. A deep Venetian red would do very well, but it might look heavy and is the reverse of retiring, whereas in a small room, where there is any considerable

quantity of wood-work, a too powerful color will obtrude itself upon us. Ultimately we choose a gray-blue—that is, a blue toned down with black and white and perhaps a little green, until we get a neutralized color, yet sufficiently assertive to contrast pleasingly with the wall. Gray-blue, however, thus composed, cannot be said to be "warm;" and our room is cold, looking northward; and, like many another London room, seems to want that touch of red without which no picture is said to be quite satisfactory. Indeed, we could endure rather more than a touch of red in this room, but where to put it? Parti-colored wood-work is a thing to be deprecated, because the joinery of a room is manifestly all of a piece, and a blue door and red skirting-board at once detaches it. A blue door with red panels would be possible, but patchy. Red mouldings might divide the wall courses, only the gray-blue is less hard and cutting; so we refrain from altering it.

Nothing remains but the gray marble chimney-piece, cold in color and of no structural merit. Why not paint that? The paint will hold at least for a considerable time. It should be ground and mixed with turpentine.



DINING-ROOM CHAIR, MADE BY IRMLER, OF VIENNA.

So it is decided to paint the mantelpiece a full Indian red, not an orange cast of red, which is crude and ugly, but a deep crimson-toned Venetian red. An arrangement of shelves and small cupboards placed above the mantel and painted the same red, terminating in a cornice, made to intersect with our shelf-moulding; this and the chimney-piece make a bold break in the otherwise somewhat cold uniformity of tone. A few bits of brass in the shape of handles and hinges (old pieces accidentally picked up) relieve the surface of red, and a few books, ornaments, and carefully colored pipes may do the rest.

As we gaze at the dismal black cast-iron thing that does duty for a fireplace, our faces grow long. The twisted rope mouldings—ignobly spun in a mould instead of hammered on a forge; the ruthless scrolls—that obnoxious heraldic device; surely anything would be better than to sit face to face day after day with this insolent reminder that engineering is better than art! If it were a simple combination of iron plates and bars and rivets we would not so much mind; it is the bombastic pretence, the impertinence that would challenge comparison with the beautiful wrought-iron work of

preceding ages that disgusts us. There can be no question about the cast-iron machine: out it must come. We proceed to fill in the now vacant interior (which it may surprise some to find is a square brick opening) with a dull red unglazed tile of oblong shape and plaited in squares of three. These are cemented to the rough brick sides and back, and also laid in the hearth, first removing the hearthstone. There is a homeliness about the brick color of this tile which suits our room fairly well, although the porous nature of an unglazed tile renders it rather less serviceable, and more liable to absorb dirt and grease.

A small basket-grate or dog-stove may now be placed in the open tiled recess: this, as now made, is for the most part an objectionable piece of metal work, and if desired may be a highly creditable example of skilled work in iron or brass. In summer a grate of this sort can be removed to make way for evergreens—or an open lattice work frame may be inserted in the vacant space, so as not to exclude the air.

Before the painters have finished their work, the two recesses on either side of the fireplace have been fitted with pine shelves and cupboards arranged for books, fishing-tackle, and what not; these are painted in with the rest of the gray-blue wood-work, and are made just so high as to range with our top shelf-moulding. Had they been painted to match the mantel-piece the preponderance of red would have been too great. A cupboard at the base of one of the bookcases and an embroidered curtain to the other give balance with variety.

As a minor detail, the panels of the door, the largest unrelieved surface of paint in the room, are filled in with a patterned flock paper exactly matching the gray-blue of the paint, the surface-texture and the pattern alone betokening the difference. A brass handle and finger-plates tell very well against the color of the door, and light up a dark corner.

The olive and gold hangings, by the way, are made to depend from small hooks or eyelets fixed in the lower moulding; are gathered into a fold at distances of a foot and a half and stretched tightly from hook to hook; they reach almost to the floor. They can of course be easily removed for brushing.

The decoration of the room is now complete, except the window; and here we have no alternative but to replace the glass by a less transparent rough rolled cathedral glass which shall slightly obscure the view without materially diminishing the light.

All expedients of colored or tinted muslin, either as blind or curtains, were found to take from the light, but curtains of a deep coral red wool and silk material for closing in the window at night were arranged in two halves—the upper curtains suspended from a thin iron rod above the window, and the lower half of the window screened by dwarf curtains of similar colored stuff running horizontally on a slender brass rod.

To sum up, the "Bachelor's Sanctum" has a creamy-yellow ceiling, and cornice broken by lines of deeper tint.

Upper wall-course, or frieze, as far as top of door—of greenish yellow-paper of flowing damask pattern.

Middle wall-course, or picture space, of plain citron-olive distemper color; moulded shelf above and small moulding below this central space painted gray-blue.

Lower wall-course or dado, of russet-olive and gold wool and silk damask.

Wood-work—doors, shutters, skirting, and bookcases—painted gray-blue.

Chimney-piece and shelves over, rich Venetian red.

Sober color prevails in the lower half of the room, broken by the deep red of the chimney projection, and heightened by the decorative qualities of the paintings with their gilt frames (hung from half-inch iron rods under the shelf moulding) that fall into their place appropriately and as a part of the decoration, which is seen to have been thought out, not flung together haphazard. While, however, the walls immediately around us are quiet and reposeful, though rich, the upper portion is full of a softened light, and in winter time the ruddy flame from the logs or coal burning in the open fireplace is sufficient to penetrate to the farthest and topmost

corner of the room. Such are some of the results and advantages of a complex scheme of treatment; and so far from cutting up or dwarfing a small room, they may be useful in giving a sense of space and of variety quite outside the power of one single paper, howsoever costly, to produce.

For furniture, there are a pedestal writing-table, of oak, not very dark, with some carving about it, and polished iron fittings of fine workmanship; a quaint couch with panelled boxed-in sides, also of oak, the panels elaborately carved in foliated Gothic ornament; a still more quaint arm-chair, the arms and back surmounted with grotesque carved heads, half animal, half human; an old oak chair "picked up;" with a Persian carpet or large rug of good coloring—yellow pine centre with dark blue border—thrown over the stained and polished floor: this much may be said of furniture; but indeed it does not matter much what furniture is put into this room, provided it is not of the debased modern brainless style. Anything old, quaint, and handy will do.

HOW TO BEGIN FURNISHING.

To achieve harmony in furnishing a room, the utmost care must be used; even the most experienced ornamentists have to give much thought in order to produce in form and color that sense of repose without which no arrangement can be truly artistic. Dr. Dresser gives some practical directions how to proceed to attain this result. Fix on one thing first, he says; and the best thing to fix on, as the starting-point, is that which it is most difficult to obtain in a number of good colorings—say, the window-hangings. These being fixed upon, the key-note of our composition is struck; now, with the hangings before you, and even resting on the carpet, consider whether the two not only look fairly well together, but whether or not they actually improve each other. Do not be afraid of placing two or three strips of carpet together before you settle; for the nearer the mass of color comes to that which will be seen upon the floor, as you have the whole curtains before you, the better. Try carpet after carpet till you get the right one; but if blue prevails in the hangings it need not, therefore, predominate in the carpet; indeed, it is not necessary that there be any blue in the carpet at all, for we are seeking to produce a harmony and not to get a monotone effect. Having the hangings and the carpet arranged, the color of the wall may be considered, for this can readily be made of any required tint; next settle on the treatment of the ceiling, for it must not remain white if all the parts of the room are to make one concordant whole, and go on in this way throughout, remembering that nothing can be brought into the room as a part of its furniture or decoration which is too insignificant for careful consideration.

As in choosing the first article of furniture for a room the key is struck for the entire decorative scheme, the first article selected (continues the writer) must be chosen with due regard to the requirements of the case. If a room looks out upon a lawn or noble trees, it is wrong to give to it a green tone, for by so doing the lawn and the trees will never appear to have that freshness which they otherwise bear, and they, in their turn, will react upon the room so as to destroy its pleasant effect. If the room has a cold aspect, "warm" colors should be used in its furnishing; and if it be much exposed to sunlight, then its treatment should be "cool." Thus the first article for the room must be selected with due regard to all such considerations as these.

STAINED AND POLISHED FLOORS.

WHILE among practical writers on decoration there are few advocates of the polished wooden floor which fashion has revived, a mere margin of wood has much to commend it, especially on the score of cleanliness. A carpet which covers the entire floor is the special harbinger of dust and disease. It cannot conveniently be taken up more than once or twice in the year, and the effect of a daily brushing is to redistribute, but not to remove, the noxious accumulations.

Mr. R. W. Edis, a well-known London authority on artistic furnishing, in a recent lecture before the Society of Arts, gave his opinion on the subject to this effect. He said the margin might either be painted, or

stained, or covered with parquet, but he declined to give his sanction to the so-called "carpet-parquet" (a kind of veneer much advertised in London) laid down over the flooring. If painted, it should be covered with several coats of some dark color. It is important that these successive coats should be uniformly dark, otherwise scratches upon the floor may show white; and care must be taken to allow each coat to harden. Parquet, Mr. Edis said, is more showy, perhaps, than painting or staining, but he was unprepared to say that it was more artistic. It is more expensive, of course, being somewhat costly in itself, and involving, besides, the cutting away of the flooring. A parquet or stained margin having been left, within this a carpet might be pinned down, which could easily be taken up as often as required.

A writer in *Scribner's Monthly* takes strong ground against painting the floor. He advises those who cannot afford to have inlaid or even single natural wood floors to have the pine boards planed and then stained and polished, and proceeds in the following practical way to tell how this may best be done:

"First, if your floor has been already painted, or is covered with drippings from the paint-brush, cover the spots and splashes with caustic potash; leave this on till the paint is dissolved. It will take, perhaps, thirty-six hours to do this if the paint is old and hard; then have the floor well scoured, taking care not to let the mixture deface your wash-boards.

"Secondly, if your flooring is marred by wide, ugly cracks between the planks, have them puttied, as they serve otherwise as a multitude of small dust-bins, and show an ugly stripe between your shining boards.

"If the planks are narrow and of equal width, you can have them stained alternately light and dark—oak and walnut. In that case, stain the whole floor oak, and then do the alternate stripes dark. The staining mixture can be bought at any paint-shop, or can be ordered from any city, and brought by express in sealed cans. In almost every case it is safe to dilute the staining mixture with an equal quantity of turpentine. I have never seen or used any which was not far too thick as it is bought. It helps very much, when staining in stripes, to lay two boards carefully on each side of the stripe to be stained, and then draw the brush between. This guards the plank from an accidental false stroke of your brush and saves time to the aching back. If, however, the dark staining should chance to run over on the light plank, before it dries wipe it off with a bit of flannel dipped in turpentine.

"When the floor is to be all walnut, the best staining I have ever seen is done without the use of a brush. Buy at a grocer's—for a single medium-sized room—a one-pound can of burnt umber, ground in oil. Mix with boiled linseed oil a sufficient amount of this to color properly without perceptibly thickening the oil; by trying the mixture upon a bit of wood till the desired color is attained, the quantity can easily be determined. It should be a rich walnut brown. Rub this into the wood thoroughly with a woollen cloth, rubbing it off with another woollen cloth till the stain ceases to come off. Never be beguiled into using boiled oil to keep the floor in order, for it is more like a varnish than an oil, and after the pores of the wood have once become filled, it lies on the surface, attracting and holding dust till it ruins the wood, and can only be removed by the use of caustic potash, sand-paper, or the plane. But this first, or any subsequent coloring of the floor, must be done as here directed.

"If you find, when the coloring matter dries, that it is not dark enough, rub on another coat. Do not be discouraged that your floors look dull and poor, for they only need a few weeks of proper care to be what you want.

"When the staining is done, prepare for the next day's waxing. Mix turpentine and yellow beeswax in the proportion of one gallon of turpentine to one pound of wax, shaved thin. Let the wax soak all night, or longer, in the turpentine before using; then rub it on with a woollen cloth. A few times of using this will make the floor gain a polish like that of an old-fashioned table-top. At first it must be done frequently, but beyond the smell of the turpentine, which soon passes off, and the trouble of applying, it has no disadvantage. When the wood finally becomes well polished, the wax need not be applied oftener than once a week, or even once a fortnight. The floor, in the mean time, can be dusted off by passing over it an old groom or hair floor-brush, with a piece of slightly moistened rag tied around it. Everything that falls upon it lies upon the surface,

as on that of varnished furniture. Nothing ever really soils it. It can, of course, be washed up, but never needs scrubbing."

For the floors of halls or passages, Mr. Edis, in the lecture above referred to, recommended the use of marble-mosaic, or marble-mosaic tiles. Linoleum or oil-cloth is bad, being so soon worn out, besides being obtainable only in patterns which are bad in color, in treatment, and design, and poor imitations at the best. It is not desirable to make our already narrow spaces seem narrower by the use of tiles too obtrusive in color or too elaborate in design. Marble-mosaic tiles are composed of chips of marble set in cement. These are inexpensive, and properly chosen have a good effect.

Domestic Art Notes.

GLASS floorings are now being made in France, the upper surface moulded in diamonds.

CARVED wooden knife-boxes and salt boxes, of an old English style, are being made for the kitchen.

WILLOW-PATTERN cups and saucers printed in colors are being used largely in England for invitations to tea.

WHAT purports to be a Pompeian vein of design is setting in for certain pieces of metal furniture, such as lamps.

SETS of door furniture in Egyptian style—handle, bell-pull, knocker, and letter-plate—are being made for large houses in London.

THE London Pottery Gazette thinks it probable that "our grandmothers painted in ceramic colors, if not on plaques, at least on dinner-plates, under the tuition of the Brothers Bradley, of Pall Mall, who fired their productions in a kiln where the Reform Club now stands."

"MIGHT not something be done to relieve the unspeakable dreariness of illimitable stucco?" asks Mr. Edis, mourning over the dinginess of the buildings in London. He suggests that inlaid plaques or panels of marble would be suitable for exterior wall decoration; they are made brighter by every breeze, and in the rainfall they become brilliant.

PAINTED dresses are still in vogue on both sides of the Atlantic. An effective arrangement recently noticed in London was made by the front breadth of a Princesse-cut tea gown being painted in wisteria blossom, and another in jasmine. The painting in such work should never be thick with body colors; the shades should blend in to the color of the ground.

THE fashion of painting muslin for dresses is being revived. At the Social Guild Bazaar recently held at Nottingham, England, the room was arranged in the form of a street of the middle ages, the balcony enabling the spectators up-stairs to look down from the upper windows of the houses, while a mediæval castle appropriately occupied one end of the hall. As many of the fair stall-keepers were arrayed in the costumes of the period, the effect was striking and unique.

NOVICES should not attempt too much in the way of color. Harmonies in shades of one color are usually successful, especially in golden browns and reds. If all the colors are used together they harmonize each other, as we see in Indian and other polychrome work. Two or three colors require great circumspection to get them right, for all combinations depend very much on the shade and tone of each, and all presuppose a skill in coloring that is in part a gift, but in part also the result and reward of study and experience.

FERNS, well pressed and dried, and then painted thickly with liquid gold paint, are sometimes applied with good effect to the doors of a cabinet. One who has tried the experiment and succeeded says: "After gumming the backs, I arranged them on the panels of the door, pressing them with an old soft cloth. Where the gold paint moved off, I painted it again when dry. Lastly, I carefully laid on a wash of clear varnish, doing it as quickly as possible. This preserves the ferns and gilding, and improves their appearance."

A RECENT improved receipt for preserving plants with their natural colors is to dissolve 1 part of salicylic acid in 600 parts of alcohol, heat the solution up to boiling-point in an evaporating vessel, and draw the plants slowly through it. Shake them to get rid of any superfluous moisture, and then dry between sheets of blotting-paper, under pressure, in the ordinary manner. Too prolonged immersion discolours violet flowers, and in all cases the blotting-paper must be frequently renewed. The novelty appears to be the salicylic acid.